

REMARKS**Status of Claims**

Claims 1-32 were pending at the time of the outstanding office action. By way of the instant amendment, Claims 4-6, 14-15, 19, 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 have been cancelled. New Claims 33-42 have been added. Thus, Claims 1-3, 7-13, 16-18, 20-21, 22-24, 25, 27, 29 and 31-42 remain for examination.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that Claims 4-6, 9-10, 14, 16-20, 22, 24, 26, and 28-32 are objected to but would be allowable if written in independent form. By way of the instant amendment, Claim 4 has been incorporated into Claim 1, Claim 5 has been incorporated into Claim 2, and Claim 6 has been incorporated into Claim 3. Further, the limitations of Claim 22 have been incorporated into independent Claim 1. Thus, the limitations wherein the controller stores a counter-value, as recited in Applicant's dependent Claims 4-6 and 22 has now been incorporated into each of the respective Claims 1-3 and 21. It is thus submitted that Claims 1-3 and 21 are in condition for allowance. Claims dependent either directly or indirectly upon these independent claims are likewise deemed allowable.

Newly submitted independent Claims 33, 34, 35 and 42 correspond, respectively, to independent Claims 1, 2, 3 and 21, but omit the limitation "and when it receives an Ether frame having a broadcast MAC address, it transmits said Ether frame to all ports except a port which has received said Ether frame and stores a corresponding relationship between a MAC address from which said Ether frame has been transferred and said port which has received said Ether frame in said MAC two port table memory." Limitations concerning the broadcast MAC address are not deemed to be necessary in connection with patentability of the claims, especially in as much as these new independent Claims 33-35 and 41 recite that the controller stores a counter value as recited in originally submitted dependent Claims 4-6 and 22. It is thus submitted that the newly submitted independent Claims 33-35 and 42 are likewise patentable, essentially for the same reasons applicable to independent Claims 1-3 and 21.

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Likewise, claims dependent upon these newly submitted independent claims are similarly deemed patentable.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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